



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

October 23, 1996

Effective Date: November 15, 1996

COMMISSIONER'S POLICY STATEMENT NO. 58

CLIENT CARE AND GENDER ASSIGNMENT

The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services is committed to achieving a balance in the gender composition of client care services involved in giving direct care to clients. It is recognized that at times it might be most appropriate to assign staff by gender to provide special care.

This policy is based on two considerations: Section 17a-542 of Chapter 319i of the Connecticut General Statutes, which states in part..."Every patient treated in any facility for treatment of persons with a mental illness shall receive humane and dignified treatment at all times, with full respect for his personal dignity and right to privacy."; and the Department's philosophy that staffing must be based on identified client needs and strengths.

There are two basic ways in which the human dignity and treatment needs of clients affect decisions about staffing policy, deployment and assignment.

- I. A basic tenet of our service delivery system is that treatment is most effective when provided in a manner which is as close as possible to normal life experiences and settings. Because most people generally live in a community of two genders, providing such an environment is a basic need in treatment. Therefore, in both residential and other treatment settings, a gender balance similar to that in normal community life is most desirable.
- II. Specific individual and situational conditions identified by a professional evaluation may also indicate a need for gender consideration in staffing. These conditions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

a client whose psychodynamics indicate that treatment by a clinician of a particular gender is most likely to be effective;

a client who has been evaluated to have the potential for or recent history of assaultiveness toward a particular gender;

a client who has been evaluated to have symptoms of homosexual panic;

a situation in which a staff member may be or has been subjected to client accusations of inappropriate sexual behavior;

a client request for the presence of a specific gender;

clients needing assistance with or requiring observation of intimate personal hygiene activities.

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Client care services will address these needs through permanent or temporary assignments or deployment.

However, this is not intended to exclude the presence of licensed professionals of opposite gender, specifically physicians and nurses, whose professional education has particularly prepared them to assess care for clients' physical needs.



Albert J. Solnit, M.D.
Commissioner

For the purposes of Commissioner's Policy Statement No. 58, client care services shall be understood to mean the following job titles:

- Clinical Education Specialist
- Clinical Nurse 1
- Clinical Nurse 2
- Clinical Nurse Coordinator
- Forensic Head Nurse
- Forensic Nurse
- Forensic Treatment Specialist
- Head Nurse
- Lead Forensic Treatment Specialist
- Lead Nurse Clinician
- Lead Rehabilitation Counselor
- Licensed Practical Nurse
- Mental Health Assistant 1
- Mental Health Assistant 2
- Mental Health Associate
- Mental Health Trainee
- Nurse Clinical Instructor
- Nurse Clinical Specialist
- Nurse Clinician
- Nurse Supervisor
- PSW
- PSW Assistant
- PSW Associate
- PSW Director 1
- Registered Professional Nurse (Per Diem)
- Rehabilitation Counselor 1
- Rehabilitation Counselor 2
- Rehabilitation Counselor Trainee
- Rehabilitation Therapist 1
- Rehabilitation Therapist 2
- Rehabilitation Therapy Assistant 1
- Rehabilitation Therapy Assistant 2
- Rehabilitation Therapy Supervisor 1
- Rehabilitation Therapy Supervisor 2
- Staff Nurse
- Supervising Clinician

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This directive replaces Commissioner's Policy Statement No. 58 dated May 1, 1993.